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News Release

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2 indicted for conspiracy to transport stolen property

A 27-year-old St. Paul woman and a 34-year-old man have been indicted in connection with an alleged conspiracy to transport stolen merchandise across state lines.

Lisa Marie Krey and Thomas Edward Pracht, unknown address, were charged March 19 in Minneapolis by a federal grand jury with one count of conspiracy to transport stolen property and one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud. Krey was arrested yesterday and made her initial appearance before United States Magistrate Judge Janie Mayeron. Pracht is in custody on other charges.

"Using the U.S. Mail to ship your stolen merchandise is not a good idea," said Adam P. Behnen, assistant inspector in charge of the St. Paul Field Office. "The United States Postal Inspection Service has a long and proud tradition of keeping the U.S. Mail safe and secure for over 200 years and we plan on doing so for the next 200 years. Our enforcement efforts are aimed at protecting the U.S. Mail system and to deter those who wish to abuse that system."

Their indictment alleges that from March 2006 through Nov. 21, 2007, Krey and Pracht engaged in a conspiracy to knowingly transport stolen goods in interstate commerce goods worth at least \$5,000.

The indictment also alleges that a purpose of the conspiracy was that the defendants would steal merchandise from retail businesses in and outside of Minnesota and transport the stolen merchandise to businesses in Minnesota, which would then sell the stolen items to third parties over the Internet. The stolen merchandise would be delivered to the third parties by means of the U.S. Mail.

The defendants, the indictment alleges, committed several overt acts in order to further the conspiracy. They included presenting stolen merchandise for sale at businesses in Oakdale and Woodbury; stealing merchandise from a business in Newton, Iowa and then traveling from Iowa to Minnesota in possession of said stolen merchandise; and attempting to steal merchandise from a business in Red Wing and a business in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisc.

If convicted, both defendants face a potential maximum penalty of five years in prison on the transporting stolen property conspiracy count and 20 years on the mail fraud conspiracy count. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Woodbury Police Department and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert M. Lewis.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.